

# Are you ready for tomorrow's world?

Sign up for Broader Mind Course



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# BROADER MIND COURSE

Fuel change

## Are you ready for tomorrow's world?

Do you control your digital environment or does it control you? How can we reduce poverty and our dependence on plastic? Are you satisfied with the way our society defines 'success'?

These burning issues – and many others – are covered in the Broader Mind Course. This is an extracurricular course for all VU students which focuses on your personal development and involvement with societal issues. In a interdisciplinary group of students from all VU faculties you will be involved in an innovative course that will challenge your perspective on different topics and help you understand how to optimize on your differences from others -- preparing you well for any future workplace in the dynamic world we know today. The course is open for all students from all faculties as a complement to your regular program. It has been uniquely designed by students of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam with the assistance of many staff members.

**The course runs from February till June 2024 (P4 + 5).**

## Why should you sign up?

- **A challenge to look beyond your own discipline.** The multidisciplinary themes present you with both personal and societal challenges allowing you to develop your sense of self, academic, and interpersonal skills – all of which will help prepare you for success in any future workplace.
- **You can choose from two tracks with each 4 themes.** In Track A you will work on the themes of Success & Failure, Poverty, Human Body and Rebellion. Track B includes the themes of Health & Happiness, Digital World, Viewpoints & Worldview and Sustainability. Every theme takes three weeks to complete.
- **You will alternate between online and offline activities.** Watch inspirational videos, read articles and interviews online, complete challenges and come together for discussions and creative assignments with other students. You will complete every theme with a group event.
- **You will work with students from other degree programs.** Broaden your perspective by examining a societal issue from both academic and personal points of view which may be different to your own. An excellent preparation for your future career in which you will almost certainly find yourself working with people from different backgrounds.
- **You'll become aware of your own role, behaviour, predispositions and biases.** Societal issues can best be solved by synergizing all our unique backgrounds and perspectives in order to find solutions. This course helps you learn cooperation skills which will help you to impact the world together with your peers, fellow students and future colleagues.
- **You will make new contacts and friends.** Expanding your network is an added bonus! You will not only strengthen your network and boost your CV, but also improve your future career prospects.

# Track A

## P4 - P5

2023-2024

**P4**

Feb '24

1 Plenary kick-off meeting

• Tue 06 *or* Wed 07 Feb

17:30-18:30 hrs

3 weeks:



Theme 1:  
Success & Failure

2 meetups:

• Tue 13 *or* Wed 14 Feb  
• Tue 27 *or* Wed 28 Feb

17:30-18:30 hrs  
17:30-19:30 hrs

Mar '24

3 weeks:



Theme 2:  
Poverty

2 meetups:

• Tue 05 *or* Wed 06 Mar  
• Tue 19 *or* Wed 20 Mar

17:30-18:30 hrs  
17:30-19:30 hrs

Mid-term Assignment  
Inspirational Talks (optional)  
Free week (Assessment Week)

**P5**

Apr '24

3 weeks:



Theme 3:  
Human Body

2 meetups:

• Tue 02 *or* Wed 03 Apr  
• Tue 16 *or* Wed 17 Apr

17:30-18:30 hrs  
17:30-19:30 hrs

May '24

3 weeks:



Theme 4:  
Rebellion

2 meetups:

• Tue 23 *or* Wed 24 Apr  
• Tue 07 *or* Wed 08 May

17:30-18:30 hrs  
17:30-19:30 hrs

1 Final Meeting

**Learn to  
speak up**

Free week (No Teaching or Assessment)  
Final Assignment

• Tue 21 *or* Wed 22 May

17:30-19:30 hrs

Jun '24

Certificate Ceremony Event (mid June)

# Track B

P4 - P5

2023-2024

**P4**

Feb '24

1 Plenary kick-off meeting

• Tue 06 *or* Wed 07 Feb

17:30-18:30 hrs

3 weeks:



Theme 1:  
Health & Happiness

2 meetups:

• Tue 13 *or* Wed 14 Feb  
• Tue 27 *or* Wed 28 Feb

17:30-18:30 hrs  
17:30-19:30 hrs

Mar '24

3 weeks:



Theme 2:  
Digital World

2 meetups:

• Tue 05 *or* Wed 06 Mar  
• Tue 19 *or* Wed 20 Mar

17:30-18:30 hrs  
17:30-19:30 hrs

Mid-term Assignment  
Inspirational Talks (optional)  
Free week (Assessment Week)

**P5**

Apr '24

3 weeks:



Theme 3:  
Viewpoints &  
Worldview

2 meetups:

• Tue 02 *or* Wed 03 Apr  
• Tue 16 *or* Wed 17 Apr

17:30-18:30 hrs  
17:30-19:30 hrs

May '24

3 weeks:



Theme 4:  
Sustainability

2 meetups:

• Tue 23 *or* Wed 24 Apr  
• Tue 07 *or* Wed 08 May

17:30-18:30 hrs  
17:30-19:30 hrs

1 Final Meeting

Free week (No Teaching or Assessment)

Final Assignment

• Tue 21 *or* Wed 22 May

17:30-19:30 hrs

Jun '24

Certificate Ceremony Event (mid June)

Learn to  
understand others

## Reimagine success

### Practical details



Open to all VU Amsterdam Bachelor's students (1st – 3rd year).



Language: English.



Interdisciplinary: mix of students from all faculties.



Blended learning: mix of online and on-campus activities.

Runs in periods 4 and 5, except during exam weeks.

4 (on campus) meetups on Tuesdays or Wednesdays 17:30 – 18:30.

6 (on campus) meetups on Tuesdays or Wednesdays 17:30 – 19:30.

In addition, you will do online assignments at home.

Total study load: 40 hours (approximately 3 hours per week over four months, not during exam weeks).



**Track A:** Success & Failure, Poverty, Human Body, Rebellion

**Track B:** Health & Happiness, Digital World, Viewpoints & Worldview, Sustainability



After successfully completing the course, you will receive a certificate of participation and the course will be included on your diploma supplement.

'I now realize that different areas of expertise are necessary to solve complex issues.'

Health Sciences student

'It was refreshing to hear the perspectives and views of people I wouldn't otherwise have met in the course of my studies.'

Medical student

'University is a good place to 'become something', but there should also be room to 'become someone.'

Mirjam van Praag, President of the Executive Board

'We actively seek out dilemmas. Reducing our reliance/dependence on plastic is a noble idea, but you have to compromise, be willing to make concessions and make choices.'

Pieter van Beukering, Full Professor of Environmental Economics and development team expert for the Sustainability theme

### Interested in registering for this course?

Do you want to broaden your horizons, interact with students from other faculties and work on solutions to societal issues? Then join us and sign up for the Broader Mind Course via [broadermindcourse@vu.nl](mailto:broadermindcourse@vu.nl)